

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of the claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) An absorbent article comprising:

a barrier layer;

a cover layer extending substantially parallel to said barrier layer;

a superabsorbent polymer interposed between said cover layer and said barrier layer, said superabsorbent polymer being adhered to said article in a pattern configured to distribute fluid in said absorbent article, wherein at least one portion of said absorbent article extending essentially completely across said absorbent article is substantially devoid of said superabsorbent polymer; and

a core interposed between said cover layer and said barrier layer, wherein said superabsorbent polymer is applied to said core ~~or said barrier layer~~ in said pattern, concentration of the superabsorbent polymer varying through the thickness of the core, with the highest concentration of the superabsorbent polymer being at a portion of the core closest to the barrier layer, said core being selected from the group consisting of tissue and paper towel sheet.

2. (canceled)

3. (original) The absorbent article of claim 1 wherein said pattern is configured to increase resistance of said absorbent article to tearing, said at least one portion of said absorbent article extending essentially completely across said absorbent article being more resistant to tearing than at least one other portion of said absorbent article.

4. (canceled)

5. (canceled)

6. (original) The absorbent article of claim 1 wherein said barrier layer comprises a material selected from the group consisting of polyethylene, polypropylene, copolymers of polyethylene and polypropylene, polyester, and bi-component fibers.

7. (original) The absorbent article of claim 1 wherein said cover layer comprises one or both of a non-woven material and an apertured film.

8. (original) The absorbent article of claim 1 wherein said pattern forms at least one region including said superabsorbent polymer and at least one continuous zone that is substantially devoid of said superabsorbent polymer, said continuous zone having greater tear resistance than said region including said superabsorbent polymer.

9. (original) The absorbent article of claim 8 wherein said pattern is selected from the group consisting of a spiral pattern, a melt blown pattern, a multi-tracked pattern, a full coat pattern, a zoned spray pattern, and an intermittent pattern.

10. (original) The absorbent article of claim 1 wherein said superabsorbent polymer is formed from one or more of a polymer in liquid form and a polymer formed by conversion of a superabsorbent precursor, said superabsorbent precursor comprising one or both of a monomer and an oligomer.

Claims 11-15 (cancelled)

16. (currently amended) An absorbent underpad comprising:

- a barrier layer;
- a cover layer extending substantially parallel to said barrier layer;
- a tissue layer interposed between said cover layer and said barrier layer; and
- a superabsorbent polymer applied in liquid form to said tissue layer, said superabsorbent polymer being applied in a pattern configured to distribute fluid in said absorbent article, concentration of the superabsorbent polymer varying through the thickness of the core, with the highest concentration of the superabsorbent polymer being at a portion of the core closest to the barrier layer, wherein portions of said tissue

layer are at least partially coated with said superabsorbent polymer and other portions of said tissue layer are substantially free of said superabsorbent polymer.

17. (previously presented) The absorbent article of claim 1, wherein the core is made of paper towel sheet.